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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

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INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Colombia

DATE DISTR.

SUBJECT Labor Situation in Antioquia

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1. In view of the recent newspaper reports regarding the labor situation in the Department of Antioquia, Colombia, it is believed the following information, may be of interest.

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2. At the present time four syndicates are on strike: the carpenters and cabinet-makers of the IDIOMA, Manuel Z. Zapata, and Taller Hernandez shops, and the garment workers of Confecciones Colombia (Everfit). All four strikes are being organized and directed by the communist-dominated Federacion de Trabajadores de Antioquia (FEDETA), which has offered financial support and is urging all affiliated syndicates to strike. The city of Medellin is plastered with posters urging support of the strikers and denouncing the owners of the shops, and particularly the Asociacion Nacional de Industriales (ANDI). There are also posters urging attendance at various meetings, including those which FEDETA is endeavoring to organize daily in front of those factories whose workers are on strike. The meeting held on the afternoon of 10 August 1949, was reportedly very scantily attended and was characterized by speeches by FEDETA leaders and strikers, mainly directed against the ANDI, the owner of the shop, and against the mayor of Medellin because of the dismissal of municipal workers.
3. At the present time all four strikes have been submitted to arbitration as required by Colombian law. Source believes that there is little chance of successful arbitration as it is believed that neither the workers nor the owners will concede on any points. However, source does not feel that there is any danger of public disturbance as a result of these strikes because at least at present the number of striking workers is not large, and the larger and more influential syndicates are not involved. In addition, the local authorities have taken measures to maintain order.
4. Four labor inspectors, two Liberals and two conservatives, are studying the questions carefully. FEDETA was attempting to organize a general meeting of syndicate presidents for Saturday, 13 August 1949.

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